

CLAIMS:

1 1. (previously presented) A portable camera device capable of operation with a
2 host platform, the portable camera device comprising:
3 a housing;
4 a USB plug integrally adapted to the housing of the portable camera device to
5 facilitate direct coupling of the portable camera device via the USB plug to a USB socket of
6 the host platform;
7 a non-volatile memory in communication with said USB plug;
8 a digital camera, integrally formed with said non-volatile memory, for capturing
9 image and/or audio information, said non-volatile memory capable of storing said image
10 and/or audio information; and
11 a microprocessor for at least in part formatting said image and/or audio information in
12 a standard image and/or audio file format compatible with the host platform.

1 2. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 non-volatile memory comprising flash memory.

1 3. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 USB plug capable of coupling to a USB port of the host platform.

1 4. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 standard image and/or audio file format comprising a JPEG file format.

1 5. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 standard image and/or audio file format comprising a GIF file format.

1 6. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 standard image and/or audio file format comprising a PICT II file format.

1 7. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, said
2 standard image and/or audio file format comprising an MPEG file format.

1 8. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, further
2 comprising a power supply circuit for receiving power from the host platform and providing
3 said power to components of the portable camera device.

1 9. (previously presented) A portable camera device as recited in claim 1, further
2 comprising a power source for providing power to components of the portable camera device.

1 10. (canceled)

1 11. (canceled)

1 12. (previously presented) A method of capturing image and/or audio information
2 and uploading the image and/or audio information to a host platform, comprising the steps of:

3 (a) capturing image and/or audio data using a portable camera device, said
4 portable camera device having a housing and a USB plug integrally adapted to the housing to
5 facilitate direct coupling of the portable camera device via the USB plug to a USB socket of
6 the host platform;

7 (b) digitizing said image and/or audio data captured in said step (a);

8 (c) processing said image and/or audio data digitized in said step (b) into a form
9 compatible with the host platform; and

10 (d) uploading said image and/or audio data from the portable camera device to the
11 host platform via a coupling of the USB plug to a USB socket of the host platform.

1 13. (previously presented) A method of capturing image and/or audio information
2 as recited in claim 12, further comprising a step (e) of storing said image and/or audio data in
3 a volatile memory.

1 14. (previously presented) A method of authenticating an operator seeking access
2 to information on a storage medium, comprising the steps of:

3 (a) capturing image and/or audio identification data via a digital camera, said
4 digital camera having a housing and a USB plug integrally adapted to the housing to facilitate
5 direct coupling of the digital camera via the USB plug to a USB socket of a host platform;

6 (b) comparing at least portions of said image and/or audio identification data
7 against a template stored in a memory; and

8 (c) allowing access to the information if the image and/or audio identification data
9 matches the stored template upon comparison in said step (b).

1 15. (new) A portable camera device capable of operation with a host platform, the
2 portable camera device comprising:

3 a housing;

4 a USB plug integrally adapted to the housing of the portable camera device to
5 facilitate direct coupling of the portable camera device via the USB plug to a USB socket of
6 the host platform;

7 a non-volatile memory in communication with said USB plug;

8 a digital camera, integrally formed with said non-volatile memory, for capturing
9 image and/or audio information, said non-volatile memory capable of storing image and/or
10 audio information; and

11 a microprocessor for at least in part formatting said image and/or audio information in
12 a standard image and/or audio file format compatible with the host platform;

13 wherein the housing of the portable camera device and the USB plug are configured
14 such that the portable camera device is capable of being directly plugged into a USB port
15 located on the side of the keyboard section of a notebook computer sitting on a flat surface
16 without having to elevate the keyboard section from the flat surface.

1 16. (new) The portable camera device of claim 15 further wherein:
2

3 the width of said housing is between 1 and 1.5 times the width of said USB plug; and
4 the length of said housing is between 3.5 and 4 times the length of said USB plug.

1 17. (new) The portable camera device as recited in claim 15, wherein:
2 said housing comprises 2 sets of substantially parallel faces substantially orthogonal to each
3 other.

1 18. (new) The portable camera device as recited in claim 17, wherein:
2 the width of one of the sets of the substantially parallel faces is between 1 and 1.5
3 times the width of said USB plug; and
4 the length of the other set of substantially parallel faces is between 3.5 and 4 times the
5 length of said USB plug.

1 19. (new) A portable camera device capable of operation with a host platform, the
2 portable camera device comprising:
3 a housing;
4 a USB plug integrally adapted to the housing of the portable camera device to
5 facilitate direct coupling of the portable camera device via the USB plug to a USB socket of
6 the host platform;
7 a non-volatile memory in communication with said USB plug;
8 a digital camera, integrally formed with said non-volatile memory, for capturing
9 image and/or audio information, said non-volatile memory capable of storing image and/or
10 audio information; and
11 a microprocessor for at least in part formatting said image and/or audio information in
12 a standard image and/or audio file format compatible with the host platform;
13 wherein the body of the portable camera device and the USB plug are configured such
14 that the portable camera device is capable of being directly plugged into a USB port located
15 on the side of the keyboard section of a notebook computer sitting on a flat surface such that
16 there is a space between the body of the portable camera device and the flat surface.

1 20. (new) The portable camera device as recited in claim 19, wherein:
2 the width of said housing is between 1 and 1.5 times the width of said USB plug; and
3 the length of said housing is between 3.5 and 4 times the length of said USB plug.

1 21. (new) The portable camera device of claim 19 further wherein:
2 said housing comprises 2 sets of substantially parallel faces substantially orthogonal to each
3 other.

1 22. (new) The portable camera device as recited in claim 21, wherein:
2 the width of one of the sets of the substantially parallel faces is between 1 and 1.5
3 times the width of said USB plug; and
4 the length of the other set of substantially parallel faces is between 3.5 and 4 times the
5 length of said USB plug.